



St Thomas' Moorside CE (VA) Primary School
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9th January 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

Over the last few months we have had an increasing number of reports and complaints regarding children using social media outside of school in an inappropriate way. School monitors and restricts this type of activity during school hours and teaches internet safety as part of the curriculum. However, we cannot be the primary defence of children against the risks when they are not in school; it is a parent's responsibility to guide their children.

The age restrictions for using social media such as Facebook, Whatsapp and Instagram exist for a reason. It is not safe or appropriate for children of primary school age to be using these products.

Parents should monitor their children's use of the internet and social media closely and prevent them from creating and using accounts and groups when they are under the specified age.

The fact that other children or your children's friends may have access to these sites does not make them age appropriate and could be putting your child at risk by allowing their use.

Here's what the experts have to say on age guidelines.

Children under six age should not have access to smartphones (or other mobile devices) at all. Smartphone use at a very young age is damaging to developing brains.

The same advice also applies to children from ages 7 to 11: no Smartphones. However, if some parents want their children to have phones to keep in touch when they're away from home, an old-school flip phone without Internet access will do just fine.

When it comes to social media for this age group, it's absolutely not recommended. Children at this age don't understand the implications of posting things online because those critical-thinking skills don't develop at least until the age of 13.

In addition to the dangers of cyber bullying, accessing inappropriate material and adult predators, excess screen time is associated with many other problems. Poor social skills, behavioural issues, vision problems and unhealthy habits such as consuming more junk food and becoming less physically active have all been shown to be related to excessive use of electronic media by children.

On the reverse is some helpful information regarding age restrictions for popular sites and apps. We are asking all parents to check their home devices and their children's devices and ensure they are not accessing social media and gaming products in an inappropriate way.

Many thanks for your help in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. A.J. Laskey
Executive Headteacher

Age Restrictions on Popular Social Media

The provider of the outlet is not legally responsible for restricting the access of children to the product. This responsibility lies with parents.

Social Media Outlet	Legal Age Requirement	Useful Notes
Whatsapp	16 years old	
Snapchat	13 years old	Please be aware children can easily put in a date of birth that meet these requirements and will then be allowed to set up a profile.
Tik-Tok	13 years old	
Instagram	13 years old	
Youtube	No age restriction to watch 13 years old to set up a YouTube channel.	Restrictions can be put in place on home devices.
Facebook	13 years old	Please be aware children can easily put in a date of birth that meet these requirements and will then be allowed to set up a profile.
Twitter	13 years old	
Popjam	7-12 years old	
Xbox live	8 years old	Parents must set up and monitor the user.
Playstation live	7 years old	Parents must set up and monitor the user.
Animal Jam	18 years old	Please be aware children can easily put in a date of birth that meet these requirements and will then be allowed to set up a profile.
Moviestar Planet	8-15 years old	
Roblox	13 years old	Parents can disable the chat feature-recommended.
Fortnite	12 years old	This is due to the violence of not only the game but also the extreme language other users.

With all the above parental guidance and constant monitoring is highly advised. People online are not always who they make themselves out to be. Social media and online gaming can be dangerous if not used and monitored in an appropriate way.